(b) Housing is a State subject and all housing schemes are implemented by the State Governments according to their priority and requirements. However the Central Government has, launched a new scheme for provision of shelter to the pavement dwellers, in the major metropolitan cities. Under this scheme, the Central Govt. gives grants-in-aid at the rate of Rs. 4000/- per household for identified pavement dwellers' for construction of individual dwelling units. The Scheme also provides for construction of night shelters and pay & use toilets. During the year 1988-89, grants-in-aid amounting to Rs. 2.99 crores have been released for the implementation of the scheme in the cities of Calcutta, Hyderabad and Madras. This will benefit 6410 pavement dwellers.

Establishment of Consumer Councils and Courts at the Centre and at District levels

518. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 envisages formation of Consumer Councils and Courts at the Centre and at the District level;

(b) what is the number of such Councils and Courts that have been established so far; and

(c) the reasons for delay in implementing the scheme?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 envisages formation of Consumer Protection Council at the Centre and the State Level and redressal machinery at national, State and district level. It does not envisage formation of Consumer Protection Council at District level.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has constituted the Central Consumer Protection Council and the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission which have started functioning. The State Government/UT Administrations are responsible for setting up of State level Consumer Protection Council, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (State Commission) and Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum (District Forum). As per information available, so far, 28 States/UTs have set up the State level Consumer Protection Council. Redressal machinery have started functioning in 7 States/UTs. 8 States/UTs. have notified the State Commission/District Forums. In addition, Central Government has conveyed its approval to 5 States to set up this machinery.

PDS facilities to residents of unauthorised colonies

519. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the basic purpose of introducing Public Distribution System is to provide certain essential commodities at subsidised rates to the public, particularly the poorest of the poor;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that the most vulnerable sections of society are not able to avail of this benefits as they are not entitled to get a 'ration card' in the absence of a regular residential address in an authorised colony, etc.;

(c) whether Government have considered the necessity of extending Public Distribution System facility to those poor people who are citizens of India but are not fortunate enough to live in any recognised colony and go under the definition of "pavement dwellers"; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) to (d) The purpose of the Public Distribution System is to provide essential commodities at reasonable prices to the public, including vulnerable sections of the society, as also to act as an anti-inflationary measure. The implementation of the PDS being the responsibility of the

State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, the powers for deciding the rules governing the issue of ration cards rest with them.

Conditions of the Jhuggi Dwellers of Chandigarh

520. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of jhuggi colonies in the Union Territory of Chandigarh and that of Jhuggis and residents in each of these colonies;

(b) what was the population of these colonies during each of the last three years; and

(c) what are the details of the basic civic amenities like water, electricity, school, dispensary provided to these colonies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Implementation of Crash Housing Programme

521. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether crash Housing Programme is not being implemented by Government in letter and spirit;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to ensure that it is implemented expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Surplus stock of rice and wheat

522. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) the surplus stock of rice and wheat according to the latest figures;

(b) whether the Public Distribution System is sufficiently and properly geared to undertake effective supply of the essential commodities to people all over the country especially in the rural areas; and

(c) if so, details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) The stocks of rice and wheat with the Food Corporation of India as on 1.4.89 were of the order of 38.72 lakh tonnes and 23.98 lakh tonnes respectively.

(b) and (c) The Public Distribution System (PDS) is properly geared to arrange effective supply of essential commodities of PDS items to the people all over the country including rural areas. Supplies of PDS items are nevertheless supplemental in nature and not meant to provide cent per cent requirements of the population.

As on 31.12.1988, there were over 3.5 lakh fair price shops spread all over the country, of which nearly 76 per cent were in rural areas. In the year, 1988, over 15 million tonnes of foodgrains (wheat and rice) were lifted by the States/UTs from the central poof for supply through the Public Distribution System.

Assistance to Tribal Farmers for meeting Natural Calamities

523. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government give any assistance under any scheme to tribal farmers for meeting natural calamities: